

**Minutes of the Meeting  
October 1, 1998**

Projects Reviewed

Foster Marshall Building Remodel  
123 Queen Anne Avenue & 120 First Avenue West  
Block 23  
Sand Point North Shore Recreation Area  
Seattle Design Commission Handbook

Convened: 8:00am

Adjourned: 4:00pm

Commissioners Present

Rick Sundberg, Chair  
Moe Batra  
Carolyn Darwish  
Gail Dubrow  
Bob Foley  
Gerald Hansmire  
Barbara Swift

Staff Present

Vanessa Murdock  
Peter Aylsworth  
Rebecca Walls

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100198.1    Project: **Foster Marshall Building Remodel**  
                  Phase: Conceptual  
          Presenters: Cindy Hoover, Construction and Land Use  
                          Patti Frost, Bank and Office Interiors  
          Attendees: Scott Kemp, Construction and Land Use  
                          Pat Kirkness, Executive Services Department, Facilities Management  
                  Time: 1 hr. (N/C)

The Department of Construction and Land Use is planning procedural changes through the Process Improvements: Regulating Construction (PIRC) and Process Improvements: Regulating Land Use (PIRL) teams. The PIRC and PIRL teams have initiated pilot programs for new procedures with the goal of improving public service and efficiency. These procedural changes will necessitate changes in spatial organization. The proposed plan is organized around three task centers, the Applicant Services Center, the Public Resources Center, and the Review and Inspection Center. Each of these centers are will require improved technological support, education of staff and proponents, and spatial flexibility for changing needs.

The three task centers will be located in the Foster Marshall Second Avenue level, suite 200 of the Dexter Horton, and the suite 200 mezzanine. The project is approximately 35,000 square feet which includes the Foster Marshall portion, suite 200 and the mezzanine. The estimated cost of the renovation is \$1.25 million. The project is scheduled for design completion in November with construction in January 1999.

#### **Discussion:**

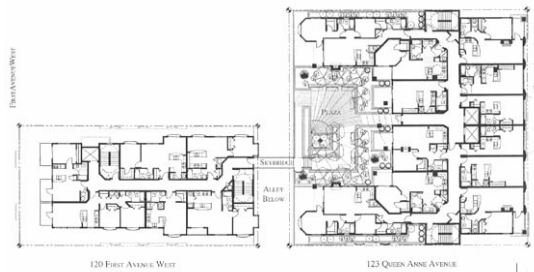
- Sundberg:** I think that the Commission is most interested in the public aspects of the reorganization and how the public will perceive the changes as public service improvements.
- Hoover:** The current plan needs approximately 5,000 additional square feet to accommodate 20 staff not accounted for. We are considering the possibility of expanding into the basement. Currently the basement can be accessed from the Land Use lobby, the main entry foyer, and the permit center in the Foster Marshall Building.
- Darwish:** Will there be a reception area in the Foster Marshall gallery space?
- Kemp:** We will need some sort of entry contact in the gallery area, but it won't be a high traffic area. The new conference room in the Foster Marshall Building may require an exit directly into a hall.
- Darwish:** Will there be public restrooms?
- Frost:** There are currently public restrooms in the land use area that will become more visible when the existing space is opened up and the microfilm library is moved.
- Kemp:** There are also public restrooms in the Foster Marshall building, although they are not easy to find.
- Swift:** As a user of DCLU, I am troubled to hear that public functions and services, such as portions of the Public Resource Center, may be placed in the basement. It seems that the goal of this reorganization is improved public service and efficiency. Placing public services in a basement space would appear counter-productive and would have functional and psychological ramifications.
- Frost:** Using basement space is an option that came out of our last meeting. It hasn't yet been explored.
- Dubrow:** The relationships between public and private spaces are very important. The large open space in suite 200 of Dexter Horton will have difficult acoustical problems and may not provide adequate work space for staff. Public access points should be

concentrated in one level, with more private staff spaces in the basement as a necessary retreat where work can be done.

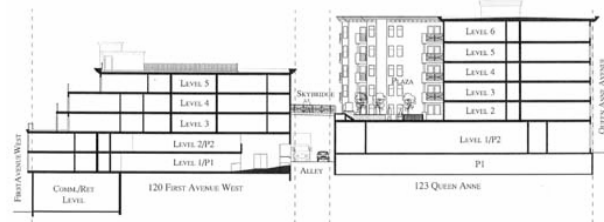
- Frost:** The staff are not particularly accepting of having office space in the basement.
- Dubrow:** Larger more gracious spaces may be a tradeoff for being in the basement.
- Frost:** We are still evaluating what spaces may be available.
- Sundberg:** Frank Lloyd Wright once said that basement spaces are uninhabitable due to a lack of light and air. This is a difficult situation that will test the original objectives of providing new and better citizen services against staff comfort.
- Dubrow:** This project seems driven by the principles of providing clearly legible public spaces and a satisfactory work environment. Providing improved public service should be the most important objective of this project.
- Swift:** What is the probable life of the project? It may be a deciding factor in the decision making process.
- Hoover:** When we started this planning process, DCLU was to be in Key Tower within three to five years. Now things have changed and the future is uncertain. We are working with a three to seven year time frame and are planning with flexibility to adapt spaces and functions over time.
- Kirkness:** When Key Tower was purchased the bulk of DCLU was designated floors 37 through 40 with express elevators to floor 40 for public access. If Key Tower is sold, then other options will be considered. Retaining the Dexter Horton Building may be necessary, in which case, DCLU could remain in its current space on the second floor. If Key Tower is retained, DCLU would move in the year 2001.
- Swift:** How will the compromises be prioritized? I know that the professional community has felt acute public irritation at the difficulty in using DCLU and the lack of transparency. I recognize that there is a tendency to focus on the internal functional issues rather than on the public perceptions of DCLU and its services, but we have to keep in mind that we are here to serve the public.
- Kemp:** This entire reorganization is founded on a monumental change in procedures. The plan is to put decision makers at the public interface rather than in a back room. It is a real reversal from the current way of providing services.
- Dubrow:** These difficult decisions will demonstrate whether priorities favor public service and perception over internal functional issues.
- Swift:** In most institutions, the attitude and values of the institution are reflected in the physical environment. DCLU is at a critical point regarding this institutional change and how it will be reflected in the new spaces.
- Frost:** Unlike most organizations, DCLU has been very willing to try new processes, using pilot programs, in pursuit of better public service.
- Dubrow:** Will jobs be redesigned with reassigned positions?
- Frost:** The jobs are changing in conjunction with changing procedures.
- Kirkness:** The Dexter Horton Building has little to no excess space to accommodate DCLU needs. The basement option primarily consists of the Seafirst lunchroom.
- Darwish:** Is the warrant section moving from the third floor of the Dexter Horton?
- Kirkness:** The warrant section will move to the new justice Center after it is complete in late 2001. DCLU has done an incredible amount of creative thinking throughout this effort.
- Action:** **The Commission appreciates the briefing and is delighted to see genuine efforts to redesign and improve current procedures. The Commission strongly encourages continued emphasis on developing public spaces that are graciously consolidated on the Second Avenue level.**

100198.2      Project: **123 Queen Anne Avenue & 120 First Avenue West**  
                  Phase: Skybridge  
          Presenters: Kent Angier, Buchan Properties  
                          Brian Runberg, Driscoll Architects  
          Attendees: Paul Janos, Construction and Land Use  
                          Brandon Nicholson, Driscoll Architects  
                  Time: 1 hr. (hourly)

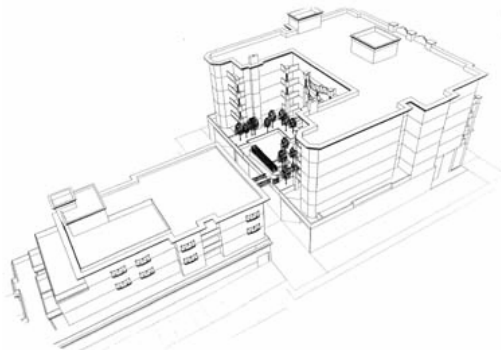
The 123 Queen Anne Avenue skybridge is intended to connect a two-phase development on properties located at mid-block on opposite sides of the alley. The proposed skybridge will span across the alley from a second floor roof plaza at 123 Queen Anne to the fourth floor of the 120 First Avenue project. The skybridge will not block views from adjoining properties and will only be visible from the subject properties and the alley. The skybridge will eliminate the need for residents to walk around the block, improving pedestrian safety in a vehicle dominated area and allowing the projects to function as a combined development.



Plan of two buildings



Section of two buildings with skybridge



Aerial perspective



Alley level perspective facing south

The evaluation criteria for skybridge proposals, established in the Downtown Plan, Policy 6: Pedestrian Circulation, Implementation Guideline 3, are as follows.

- A.** Views along view corridors designated in Policy 17: Street Level Views will not be adversely affected.
- B.** Topographic and functional conditions require pedestrian circulation above or below the street or an unsafe or congested condition exists at the street level.
- C.** Grade separation will not reduce or detract from a reasonable level of pedestrian activity on the street.
- D.** Direct physical and visual access to/from the facility will be provided to adjacent sidewalks, open spaces, or public plazas.

**Discussion:**

- Swift:** Will the First Avenue building have street level access?
- Runberg:** Yes.
- Layzer:** Is the skybridge providing a through connection from the main lobby off of Queen Anne Avenue to the First Avenue Building?
- Runberg:** The skybridge is one level above the Queen Anne Avenue entrance at street level.
- Batra:** I can understand how the skybridge will serve the building's tenants, but how will it provide a public benefit?
- Runberg:** It will provide safe and secure pedestrian access eliminating the need for tenants and guests to walk through parking lots and alleys. It is primarily a safety issue.
- Swift:** Using the skybridge evaluation criteria established in Policy 6 of the Downtown Plan, it seems that criteria A, referring to view corridors, is not an issue in this case, and that the proposal fails to meet criteria B through D. Therefore I cannot support approval of the skybridge proposal.
- Dubrow:** I agree, but would like more explanation regarding how the proposal is intended to satisfy criteria B and D.
- Runberg:** Due to the mid-block location of the project, tenants and guests would have to walk around the block or through parking lots to access the main plaza without the skybridge.
- Dubrow:** Although I am sympathetic to the site constraints, unless the evaluation criteria are met I can't support the skybridge proposal. Perhaps an alley vacation would give you more flexibility to combine the buildings into one project.
- Runberg:** We were directed to pursue a skybridge permit rather than an alley vacation.
- Angier:** The site is located near a highly congested corner. The property south of the site has recently been purchased by a parking lot company and will probably remain a parking lot. There is a slope of approximately 30 feet between Queen Anne and First Avenue.
- Runberg:** The skybridge would provide safe pedestrian access to the buildings in a vehicle dominated area as well as continuity between the two phases of the project.
- Swift:** I have concerns about the proliferation of skybridges in downtown. If the Commission supports this proposal it will raise precedent issues.
- Janos:** The site is zoned as C2 which is defined as an auto-oriented, primarily non-retail commercial area. Although it is permitted, the notion of residential construction in commercial zones may be questionable.
- Action:** **The Commission recommends against approval of the skybridge proposal based on a failure to fulfill the applicable criteria listed in the Downtown Plan, Policy 6, Implementation Guideline 3. The Commission encourages the proponent to return to the Design Review board to discuss changes to the project since the last Design Review meeting.**

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100198.3      Project: **Block 23 Alley Vacation**  
                  Phase: Alley Vacation  
          Presenters: Bill Fuller, Fuller Sears Architects  
                          Michael Mann, Office of Councilmember McIver  
                          John Miller, CB Richard Ellis  
          Attendees: Beverly Barnett, Seattle Transportation  
                          Beverly Powers Bryant, Windermere Real Estate  
                          Hildegard Crame, CB Richard Ellis  
                          Louis DeFranco, South Seattle Community Planning Committee  
                          Phillip Endicott, Columbia City Neighborhood Planning  
                          Brian Fairchild, Windermere Real Estate  
                          Clarence Forward  
                          Grover Haynes, South End Crime Prevention Board  
                          David Keyes, Columbia City Revitalization Committee  
                          Mayilyn Senour, Seattle Transportation  
                  Time: 1.5 hr. (hourly)

The proposed project is located between Rainier and 36<sup>th</sup> Avenues and Genesee and Oregon Streets. The site is immediately north of Columbia City and contains an auto body shop, an old gas station, and an old restaurant. The proposed development would consist of a Walgreen Drug Store in the center of the site, a retail building at the northwest corner of the site, and a retail building at the southwest corner along Oregon Street.

The project has been developed in conjunction with a neighborhood Design Review Board. The Transportation Committee recommends that the vacation of the alley be granted, subject to conditions. The Transportation Committee also recommends that the Design Review Board give particular attention to the pedestrian character of the project. The following conditions are intended to be used as specific guidance to the Board during review:

1. **Location of Buildings:** buildings should be sited so as to address the sidewalk, with no intervening parking areas.
2. **Pedestrian entrances:** the buildings should include pedestrian entry points on both South Genesee Street and Rainier Avenue South or at/near the corner of these two streets.
3. **Facade transparency:** the facades along both south Genesee Street and Rainier Avenue South should include storefront windows or other facade transparency, if possible.
4. **Curbcuts:** vehicle access points should be minimized and oriented as far as possible from the corner of South Genesee Street and Rainier Avenue South.
5. **Landscaping:** in addition to code-required landscaping, all blank wall areas should be screened with landscaping, and the parking areas should be well landscaped. Street trees should be provided along all street frontages.
6. **Metro bus stop:** the design should respond to the existing METRO bus stop on South Genesee Street by providing additional pedestrian amenities, facade transparency, overhead weather protection, or other features. The developer should work with METRO Facilities Planner, Drew Robinson to coordinate this effort.

**Public Comments:**

- Fairchild:** I have lived in the Rainier area all of my life. The Rainier Chamber of Commerce supports this development as a gate way to Columbia City. This is the first development of high quality that will provide a catalyst for future developments. It is important to remember that this alley has been vacated its entire length except for this portion, between Genesee and Oregon. There are only two drug stores in the Rainier Valley. During the three years that this project has been underway, four Walgreen have been built in Seattle.
- Endicott:** The Neighborhood Planning Committee also supports the concept of increased business development in the area. I am concerned about the amount of parking in the proposal. I am willing to lose the Walgreen store in order to achieve a better pedestrian environment. The Rainier area is growing and development opportunities and interests are increasing rapidly.
- Forward:** The city's process for vacating alleys, with Council conditions, is valid. However, in this case the process will result in a project that doesn't fit the contextual character of the neighborhood. Good tenants, like Walgreen, don't come around everyday. After three years in development I would like closure on this project.
- DeFranco:** This is an opportunity to improved the area with increased jobs and services. The community supports this project as a worthwhile addition to the neighborhood.
- Haynes:** The community wants this project to move ahead. It is ironic that the Councilmembers holding this project up are southeast Seattle residents.

**Commission Discussion:**

- Layzer:** The requirement for street front buildings grew out of Design Review Board requirements into Council Conditions. I would like more clarification on the amount of parking required by code versus the proposal.
- Miller:** The project has a little more than the code-required number of parking spaces because the tenant requires more than code. In this case the parking required by code would equal 67 spaces, while the tenant requires 99 spaces, or 4.27 per 1000 which is less than the retail index of five percent.
- Layzer:** Where are the transit stops along Rainier Avenue adjacent to this project?
- Miller:** There is an existing transit stop near the south end of the site on Rainier Avenue. The sidewalk and transit stop have poor lighting due to dense trees surrounding the light poles. Good lighting in the parking lot would also provide better lighting for the sidewalk.
- Mann:** If Rainier Avenue is designated as a preferred alternative location for a Sound Transit stop, then a station will probably be developed for Columbia City with the possibility of another station at the northwest corner of Genesee and Rainier.
- Layzer:** Do the pedestrian walks through the parking remain at curb height requiring vehicles to ramp up and over them?
- Miller:** Yes, they are similar to large speed bumps as a way of differentiating between pedestrian and vehicular zones.
- Dubrow:** Do you have tenants for the smaller buildings?
- Miller:** We have been approached by many possible tenants, but haven't finalized any decisions. Starbucks is interested in the south end building.
- Dubrow:** The plan appears to have a large parking lot with pedestrian crossings rather than smaller subdivided parking areas.
- Fuller:** It is difficult to get retailers to accept not having parking in front of their buildings. The front lot along Rainier Avenue will only be approximately 60 feet

across. With landscaping and pedestrian circulation it shouldn't be perceived as a sea of asphalt.

**Dubrow:** I question the continuous U shaped parking lot around Walgreen as apposed to smaller, more discreet lots. The project also lacks a street presence along Rainier Avenue.

**Miller:** The community rejected the idea of having street facades along Rainier Avenue that would create a tunnel effect.

**Layzer:** What was the reason for enclosing the loading area?

**Doherty:** The Design Review Board wanted the loading area enclosed to reduce noise and visual impacts on the adjacent residences.

**Batra:** How many new jobs will the project provide for the community?

**Miller:** The number of jobs will depend on the tenant, but I would guess about 100 new jobs would be created by the development. Walgreen has a tradition of hiring local neighborhood employees and Starbucks typically hires a lot of part time employees.

**Endicott:** Providing pedestrian shortcuts through a high traffic area with major zones of parking is setting a dangerous precedent.

**Miller:** The alternative of putting the Walgreen building on the street would result in eight to nine feet of sidewalk space along the street with the main front entrance at the rear of the building. We have tried to create safe, comfortable pedestrian connections across the site. This project has been in development for three years and has improved dramatically with better materials, a significant reduction of blank street facades, and pedestrian access. During those three years the cost of construction has increased from \$55 per foot to \$85 per foot.

**Swift:** If the Commission supports the Design Review recommendations, I urge that the pedestrian environment be reinforced with more extensive plantings and urban design amenities. A good example of strong pedestrian connections within expansive parking lots is the University Village shopping center.

**Sundberg:** I agree with Barb. The parking areas need to be visually broken up and defined as individual spaces.

**Dubrow:** Could the Walgreen building be shifted over to either Genesee Street or Rainier Avenue with parking around only three sides of the building? The community has a legitimate desire for this development, but also needs a development that will strengthen the pedestrian environment.

**Layzer:** The intent of placing the buildings along the street is to prioritize pedestrian access over vehicle access. In this project pedestrian access is equal to vehicular access, but it should be a higher priority. Increased plantings could help. The University Village is a good example of strong pedestrian links with a vehicular zone. Placing this building along Rainier Avenue may not be desirable. I could support the project if the landscaping was improved to accentuate the pedestrian realm.

**Dubrow:** Is there a problem in moving the Walgreen to Genesee with the main entrance along the west side with parking?

**Miller:** We would lose Walgreen as a tenant. The drive through pharmacy window would have to be along Genesee and the front door would have to be on the southwest corner.

**Dubrow:** Having the front door at the southwest corner would be adjacent to the primary parking areas.



- Miller:** Placing the building along Genesee won't meet the parking requirements. We tried that location while working with the Design Review Board and would do it if the tenant agreed.
- Swift:** If we support the proposal, I would require a comprehensive landscape and urban design approach to developing the parking with pedestrian amenities such as seating, extensive trees, and comprehensive development of the plaza. The parking areas should appear as pedestrian dominated zones.
- Sundberg:** I am inclined to support the Design Review Board recommendations, although it isn't the ideal solution and doesn't meet the general urban design objectives of the city. I strongly recommend a rigorous look at the urban design and landscaping issues as they define the pedestrian spaces. The proposed building at the corner of Genesee and Rainier may not be substantial enough to visually hold the corner. The plaza requires further development and definition in order to be a true pedestrian amenity. We are trying to reinforce the community with good urban design for the long-term life of this project.
- Layzer:** This project shouldn't be thought of as the best long-term solution, but it may meet immediate needs. It is important that we don't preclude future improvements.
- Keyes:** This has been a long process and the community has learned a lot while becoming more interested in pedestrian friendly development. It is important to remember that this project will set precedents for future types of development in the area.
- Dubrow:** I find it difficult to support the compromise. It is important to extend the character of Columbia City and I support a strong street edge which requires building entries that address the street.
- Doherty:** Other, recently completed, Walgreen stores in Seattle that were forced to be on the street edge have resulted in blank street facades with static display windows. This design is more engaging than if the Walgreen was forced to be along the street.
- Layzer:** Providing street presence at the corners is the most important issue because it attracts people to cross the street at the corners. Pedestrian access to the buildings at the corner is important.
- Action:** **The Commission recommends approval of the project as presented and makes the following comments and recommendations:**
- **develop a more extensive landscaping plan that will emphasize the pedestrian environment and reduce the scale of parking areas into defined spaces;**
  - **consider a larger scale building at the corner of Genesee Street and Rainier Avenue and develop the plaza as a significant public space;**
  - **provide street trees along all four sides of the site and greatly increase the number of trees within the landscaping plan;**
  - **provide more than adequate lighting of the pedestrian and parking areas;**
  - **present a landscaping plan indicating additional trees, plantings, and pedestrian amenities.**
- Commissioner Dubrow abstained.**

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100198.4      Project: **Commission Business**

**Action Items:**

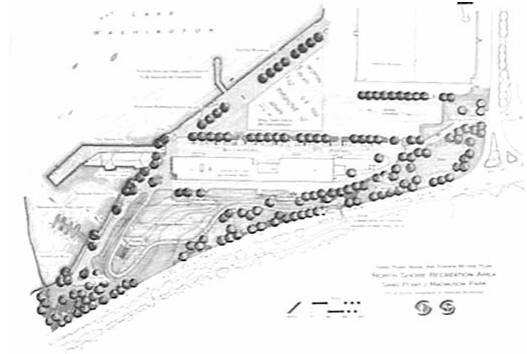
- A. MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup> MEETING: Approved as amended.

**Discussion Items:**

- B. SDC LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS: Landscape architect candidates were interviewed and recommendations were forwarded to the Mayor.
- C. HOLLY PARK SUBCOMMITTEE DESIGN REVIEW MEETING: Commissioners Darwish and Foley attended the first Design Review meeting for Holly Park phase II. Guidelines and principles for the second phase of work were presented.
- D. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH: The position is anticipated to be announced later this month.
- E. MADRONA PLAYFIELD CONSULTANT SELECTION: Commissioner Foley will participate in the consultant selection process.
- F. WSCTC ACTION OF SEPTEMBER 17: The action was revised after Commission discussion and approved as amended.

100198.5      Project: **Sand Point North Shore Recreation Area**  
                  Phase: Conceptual  
                  Presenters: Anne Strode, Parks and Recreation  
                  Peter Hummel, Bruce Dees and Associates  
                  Layne Cubell, Office of Sand Point Operations  
                  Time: .75 hr. (0.3%)

The North Shore Recreation Area is a Shoreline Park Improvement Fund (SPIF) project at the northern end of Sand Point. The proposal includes the creation of open green space on the hillside between Sand Point Way and Building Eleven with a pathway connecting to the Burke Gilman Trail. The existing pier will be repaired and the existing covered moorage shed, west of the pier, will be removed. Proposed activities include picnic areas, a small craft boat launch east of the pier, and a new floating dock west of the pier. The historic moorage building will be mothballed for future restoration.



North Shore plan

The project is adjacent to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) and is being developed in conjunction with the Sand Point Advisory Committee.

#### **Discussion:**

- Batra:** Providing a boat launch raises issues of convenience for access to load and unload zones. Will there be public restrooms nearby?
- Strode:** Providing a convenient lakeside boat launch will be a challenge because of the narrow shoreline and contaminated soils. This project has a \$500,000 construction budget and we are hoping for SPIF interest money that may increase the budget to one million dollars. Phase I of the project is focused on repairing the existing pier, developing upland green space, and replacing the floating dock. I agree that the project needs restroom facilities. There is a possibility of adding public restrooms within building eleven, identified as a historically significant building, in the future.
- Cubell:** There is a small restroom in the north end of Building Eleven.
- Dubrow:** I suggest that the inclusion of public restrooms in future phases of development be added to the project's scope so that they are planned for in advance. How will additional funds for the project be prioritized?
- Strode:** The current program requires more funding than the project has. The first priority is to create open green space and the second is to provide a small-craft boat launch. The restrooms are planned for, but lack funding at this point.
- Layzer:** Regarding the shoreline development, I encourage you to discourage swimming with carefully developed design elements rather than extensive signage.
- Dubrow:** Are there any sediment problems to be dealt with?
- Strode:** The contaminated sediments are primarily located at the west end.
- Hummel:** Soil contamination is an issue that we plan to clarify and address in the first phase of schematic design.

- Swift:** I appreciate the early presentation and the intent to maintain the open character of Sand Point and the existing buildings.
- Darwish:** How will maintenance after construction be funded?
- Strode:** That is a budget issue that will have to be addressed in planning for Sand Point Operations.
- Batra:** Is there any opportunity to connect the bike and pedestrian path with existing paths in Magnuson Park along the water, around NOAA?
- Cubell:** We are in an ongoing relationship with NOAA which the Blue Ribbon Committee will continue to develop. We are also encouraging NOAA to lower their fences and to use more landscaping elements in place of standard fencing.
- Dubrow:** Is there a process in place for ongoing dialogs with NOAA?
- Cubell:** Yes, the Sand Point Advisory Committee has members from NOAA serving on it.

Building 406 at Sand Point is being renovated to accommodate community center and day care facilities. The project includes the addition of windows at various corner locations and storefront type doors. A Montessori school will be the initial tenant in a portion of the building.

**Discussion:**

- Dubrow:** Will the Montessori school have adjacent open space outside the building?
- Strode:** The development of open space is not included in this project.
- Swift:** It is a horrible building, suitable for a brig, but not necessarily a community center. Why was this building chosen over other existing buildings?
- Strode:** It was a matter of upgrade costs, this being a recently constructed building. We are hoping to improve the aesthetic and spatial character of the building with the addition of windows, doors, and landscape elements.
- Action:** **The Commission appreciates the early briefing regarding the North Shore Recreation Area and Building 406. The Commission recognizes the budget constraints on the projects and makes the following comments and recommendations:**
- **continue to consider the recreation area view opportunities at the North Shore Recreation Area as the project is developed;**
  - **include the consideration of restroom facility opportunities in the North Shore project scope to be constructed when funding is available.**

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100198.6      Project: **Design Center**  
                  Phase: Commission Discussion  
                  Time: .5 hr. (N/C)

The Commission discussed issues regarding the creation of a Design Center office within DCLU.

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100198.7      Project: **Seattle Design Commission HANDBOOK**  
                  Phase: Final Draft  
                  Time: .5 hr. (N/C)

The Commission reviewed and commented on the Final Draft version of the Design Commission Handbook.